

**Commission on the Elimination of Poverty  
Steering Committee Conference Call  
June 13, 2010 – 3:00 p.m.  
Meeting Minutes**

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**Attendees**

Al Ridley – Illinois Coalition for Community Services  
Ashley Rook – Office of the Governor  
Doug Schenkelberg - Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights  
Linda Giannarelli – Urban Institute  
Maria Wheelan – Illinois Action for Children  
Mike Martinez ... - Urban Institute  
Samreen Khan – Office of the Governor  
Shelia Zedlewski – Urban Institute  
Sid Mohn – Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights

Urban Institute – Update on Modeling

- I. Which types of recommendations will be best for the Urban Institute to model?
- II. Linda: we examined the Commission's recommendations through two lenses:
  - a. Is the model well-suited to test the recommendation
  - b. Which recommendations are likely to have a significant impact on extreme poverty?
- III. Initial ideas about things that meet both criteria include:
  - a. Increasing rental subsidies – potentially has a big impact because of its effect on families
  - b. Education recommendations – increased education and training programming can increase levels of employment, as well as wages. This may bring about a greater impact than small increases in cash assistance as individuals find full-time employment, etc.
  - c. Income tax recommendations
  - d. Work recommendations – model can easily accommodate most work recommendations, although increasing the minimum wage may not have a huge impact
  - e. General assistance – increasing this assistance for single adults might have an impact on groups not affected by other policies. General assistance is not yet accounted for in the model, but it may be possible to capture this
- IV. Sheila: It will take a combination of policies to really reduce poverty, so we should be looking at a kind of package of policies.

- V. Resources are limited, so continue background research to ensure that modeling is focused.
- a. Doug: Heartland did analysis of who is in extreme poverty in Illinois in fall of 2009, based on the official poverty measure. Sheila suggested that information about the population in extreme poverty under the new model be gathered.
- VI. Sid: Let's begin to look at which Illinoisans are living in poverty and use this information to focus recommendations. Think about how to reduce the number of recommendations we have and focus on five or six recommendations that have the most possibility.
- a. Sheila: An effective package of policies would include policies aimed at increasing work and earnings. This kind of package might include 1) policies affecting single, unemployed adults, 2) training and subsidized jobs, 3) EITC, 4) increasing program participation, and 5) services supporting individuals with disabilities. This kind of package might have the greatest benefit.
  - b. Four populations to focus on, then, include 1) families (both single-parent and 2-parent) that are able to work, 2) individuals able to work, 3) individuals with disabilities, and 4) the elderly
- VII. Maria: Also consider recommendations in terms of "doable" and "undoable," especially in context of current Illinois climate. Focus on recommendations that will actually be able to get traction right now, and that won't allow public to think Commission is being naïve once the report is issued
- a. "Doable" recommendations that cost Illinois little money, then, might include 1) increasing take-up rates for federal programs, 2) decreasing child care co-pays, 3) percentage increase in TANF grants, or 4) incorporate Pell grants into education recommendations
- VIII. Doug: update on TANF/ARRA money for subsidized employment – Heartland was contractor for subsidized employment, and currently, 17,000 are employed through Heartland Alliance
- IX. Doug: What about modeling transitional jobs? What are the pros and cons?
- a. Sheila: Transitional Jobs have some positives, but programs must be targeted – it's difficult to design programs that are equitable and feasible but also target the right people.
  - b. Think through/review research on Transitional Jobs before going forward on modeling
  - c. Doug: any modeling on prisoner reentry?
    1. Sheila: Reentry programs likely to target certain populations, but it's hard to say whether they would actually be helping

- X. State will now have webpage for commission, which will likely be complete within a week. They are also trying to establish a share-point system that would replace Google docs.

#### Next steps

- I. Rethink recommendations in terms of potential effectiveness, ability to model, and doability
- II. Urban Institute will check on feasibility of getting analysis of poverty in Illinois based on new poverty measure by August 10 meeting
- III. Identify one to three proposed recommendations that seem to have the greatest impact (short/mid/long term) on four groups identified (families (both one- and two-parent), individuals who are able to work, individuals with disabilities, elderly individuals)

#### Timeline

- I. Urban Institute will not be able to work on modeling until late summer/fall, so release date for report will be pushed back to mid-November. Possibly, time release with veto session or link to Thanksgiving.
- II. Given new timeline, potentially schedule full commission meeting to approve final report for early November
- III. Steering Committee will continue to have monthly meetings until release of report
- IV. At August 10 meeting, Steering Committee will evaluate progress and determine whether or not to have full commission meeting on September 16 – in the meantime, meeting will remain scheduled for that date.